

South Georgia, Marion Island, Crozet Islands, Kerguelen Islands, Heard Island, Auckland Islands and Antipodes Islands. As a breeding bird it thus shares with the Georgian Diving-petrel (*P. georgicus*) a more southerly zone than that occupied by *P. urinatrix*.

W. R. P. Bourne (Notes on the diving-petrels, *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.*, 88, 1968: 77-85) discusses the possibility that some of Murphy and Harper's subspecies of *P. urinatrix* might be better aligned with *P. exsul*. As the name of one of these subspecies, *berard* Gaimard, antedates *exsul*, the Kerguelen Diving-petrel would be known as *P. berard exsul* if Bourne's hypothesis proves correct.

—G. M. STORR and R. E. JOHNSTONE,  
Western Australian Museum.

**King Penguin Egg washed ashore in Western Australia.**—On 10 January 1974 a large egg, well-covered with a growth of algae, was found on the beach about two miles east of Augusta on the south coast of Western Australia. Three beach fishermen picked it up at high water mark, looked at it, and threw it behind the first line of sand dunes. On 12 January, by sheer chance, I was in Augusta and one of the fishermen, Lew Yates of Bridgetown, mentioned the occurrence to me. With his son and several children I crossed the Blackwood River and walked down the beach approximately to where the men had found the egg. After an hour's searching and when on the point of giving up I found the egg, unbroken, among the sand dune vegetation.

The egg shell was white, although slightly stained, perhaps from the algae. The surface was pitted and the egg was typically penguin in its peg-top shape. Its measurement, 100 x 75 mm, fell within the size range of eggs of the King Penguin (*Aptenodytes patagonica*) as given by Serventy, Serventy and Warham (*The Handbook of Australian Sea-Birds*, 1971) and by Mathews (*Birds of Norfolk and Lord Howe Islands and the Australasian South Polar Quadrant*, 1928). Unfortunately there are no specimens of King Penguin eggs in the Western Australian Museum with which to compare the Augusta egg, but there seems little doubt of its identification as that of a King Penguin, which was confirmed by Mr. T. E. Bush.

I blew the egg for a specimen and was surprised to find that it contained a well-advanced embryo, quite undecomposed and with no odour of decay.

The most reasonable explanation of its presence is that it had been washed into the sea from one of the sub-antarctic nesting colonies in the southern Indian Ocean (Marion I., the Crozets, Kerguelen or Heard Is.). Being in an advanced stage of incubation it floated and was carried eastwards in the West Wind Drift. The egg-laying season of the King Penguin is recorded as between late November and mid-April and Mr. Yates's party must have found the egg almost immediately after it had fetched up on the beach.

The finding of this egg will inevitably revive speculation that the celebrated and mysterious Scott River "Big Egg" had similarly drifted here from Madagascar (its finding was reported in the *West Australian*, May 3, 1962, p. 1, and its origins discussed by R. C. Hyslop and C. J. Spackman, *Angusta Jewel Caves*, 1967, pp. 16-17, and by Harry Butler, *Science Digest*, March 1969, pp. 70-73).

—G. A. LODGE, Boyup Brook.

**Breeding of the Larger Spiny-tailed Skink, *Egernia stokesii*.**—In early July, 1975 when I was picking mallee roots on my father's farm 14 miles west of Wubin I found two lizards unusual in the district. They were 10 cm long and were at the bottom of an old pile of roots. The soil in the area was a red sandy clay. At school next day they were identified as young *Egernia stokesii*. They were released where found.

Over the next few weeks several other individuals of the species were